

Homeowners and business alike in Norfolk should select trees based on 1) ease of growth 2) ease of transplanting 3) sustainability 4) longevity. Based on these qualities, most native species are ideal. Native tree species

- help establish our native flora
- educate us on where we live ecologically
- require little to no additional nutrients to thrive
- withstand heat, drought, flooding and winds combined – much better than non-natives
- provide character and sense of place for our region
- maintain a better appearance in mature age than most non-natives

Norfolk lies soundly in the Southeast Coastal Plain topographical and botanical community. An understanding of this region's native flora illustrates how native species are well acclimated to dampness and high humidity, heat, drought and flooding, salt and winds. Additionally, wildlife habitat is intrinsically tied to the native plant community, and birds eat insects and berries that live on these plants. Cumulatively, the overuse of non-native plants discourages establishment and longevity of our natural wildlife community. A satisfying source of pleasure, continuity and permanence is found in the habitat of natives.

Large Trees

- 1) Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*) This majestic evergreen native thrives with little water, and in the same season withstands relentless flooding due to heavy rain or tide. Loving its watercourse habitat, and often persistently wet soils, it also grows easily in upland ranges –away from water- in all of Tidewater. High winds are no match for this tree either, and it is recommended in most coastal Southern cities as a reliable hurricane-tolerant native. Lifespan:150-300 years. Success in transplanting: Very High
- 2) Southern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata*) Scan the horizon in Tidewater and see this deciduous native towering over the landscape, providing shade to understory species and humans alike, and consider planting this if you have a large space. Perfectly shaped, even in its 100 plus year ages, this legacy tree exhibits a beautiful olive-like green on the top of its foliage, and gray to silver underside. Red fall hues give it an earthly and warm presence. Native in all hurricane-prone regions of the Southeast. Success in transplanting: Very High
- 3) Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*) Wonder what our region would look like without the soft-textured foliage that crisply drapes our natural scenery year-round? The native Pine –in particular the Longleaf Pine– softens our skyline unlike any conifer, and produces a free and renewable mulch. It also allows for light shade conducive for growing any lawn grass under easily. The slow rate of growth early in its life lends to its deep root structure and high wind tolerance. Wet soils and occasional flooding are an easy obstacle for this species, as are bone dry, sandy sites. Success in transplanting: Very High
- 4) Swamp Chestnut Oak (*Quercus michauxii*) A large and colorful oak with deeply fissured bark and toothed, rounded olive colored leaves with gray underside is

distinct in look from many other oaks in our area. Underused, possibly because of its large and beautiful acorns, it deserves a place in a large space to be lusted over in fall as its leaves emit reds, oranges and browns in a single leaf. Success in transplant: High

Small to Medium Trees

- 5) Fringe Tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*) This petite fragrant flowering native bursts with creamy white blooms in spring reminiscent of shredded paper. Drupaceous blue fruits in summer lend to this species' deep appeal. It is a reliable stand-in alternative native tree to the flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), a more difficult species to transplant from standard nursery stock. The Fringe tree loves moisture and light shade to full sun. Success in transplanting: High
- 6) Dwarf Palmetto (*Sabal minor*) No Southern landscape is complete without the devilishly elegant Dwarf Palmetto, a native of northeast North Carolina, and its northern range in Knott's Island. Large shrub to very small tree (with little to no trunk) at maturity, it loves full sun to shady sites, wettest of wet soils to dry soils, and can stand salt tide flooding unlike any other evergreen shrub. Stunning flowers in summer are followed by pearl-like berries for a bird habitat treat or vase alike. Beloved naturalizer or pernicious homewrecker, this plant is highly versatile and is known to live centuries. Success in transplanting: Very High
 - Additional worthy and attractive varieties: Sabal "Brazoria", Sabal "Louisiana", and Sabal Palmetto
- 7) Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) Rich and textured with pliable evergreen foliage is the hallmark of this sturdy windbreak shrub, and one known to live well over a hundred years. A strong native over much of the Eastern U.S., the Cedar performs particularly well in salty and windy areas, and in poor soils. Your home will come alive with the aromatic scent of its foliage, inside or out, and provide movement reminiscent of a classic landscape painting. Drought tolerant once established. Success in transplanting: High
- 8) Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) The lady of our landscape cannot be overlooked for sheer beauty and ease of transplant. We all know this tree well. Success in transplant: Very High This species is actually a large tree but two others related are ideal for smaller spaces:
 - Magnolia grand. "Little Gem" A wonderfully small and agreeable compromise to the large Magnolia, this slender form is easy to grow and maintain, with little to no leaf raking. Success in transplanting: Very High
 - Sweetbay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) A shrubby wetlands tree, often evergreen but partially deciduous, this natural beauty artistically form-fits to any space - sun or light shade – and reminds us of our earthly, subtropical maritime forests. Success in transplanting: High
- 9) Youpon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) One of our primary coastal evergreens, this shrub will grow in sand and poor soils alike, scruffy looking – but densely green - in natural habitat it cleans up so nicely it is often used in formal settings in fine gardens, offering easy character. Setting berries profusely in late summer, they

put on a show of red for humans and a feast for birds in winter. Drought tolerance is very high. Success in transplanting: Very High